

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 685 (Senators Dyson and Middleton)
Finance

Referred Ways and Means

Mass Transit Administration - Light Rail - Future Extension

This amended bill requires the Mass Transit Administration (MTA) to study a possible future light rail extension between certain areas in St. Mary's, Charles, and Prince George's counties. The study should include identification of property needed for the light rail extension and an identification of the property owners. MTA must estimate the total project costs for all aspects of design and construction, completion of environmental impact statements, engineering requirements, and all necessary light rail vehicles and equipment. MTA must also estimate projected ridership and farebox recoveries and must examine transportation alternatives to the proposed extension.

A technical advisory committee must be formed with regional and local agency staffs to review the study. Furthermore, MTA must present its report to the Governor, Secretary of Transportation, the General Assembly, and specified committees of the General Assembly on or before December 1, 1999. The MTA may not expend any funds to extend the light rail system prior to the presentation of this report.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Significant increase in special fund expenditures as discussed below. No effect on revenues.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful impact as discussed below.

Fiscal Analysis

State Expenditures: The bill calls for a comprehensive study by the MTA on the feasibility of a new estimated forty mile light rail system in Prince George's and St. Mary's counties. Consultants would be contracted to analyze ridership estimates, total project costs, ancillary capital improvements to surrounding roadways, alternatives to the proposed extension, and other various effects of a light rail system in the proposed area. Consultants to study a project of this size could cost the Transportation Trust Fund up to \$2,500,000.

Small Business Effect: While the bill does not provide for the extension of the light rail system, the Department of Fiscal Services notes that if such construction were undertaken, property values could be affected and opportunities could be created for small businesses.

Information Source(s): Department of Transportation (Mass Transit Administration),
Department of Fiscal Services

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